

UNIQUE CLOCK SOMO INI ENSION OFFICE

EXAMINING A SINGLE CASE WITH

THIRTY POUNDS OF TESTIMONY

INTERIOR OF THE PENSION OFFICE

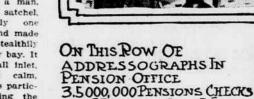
Uncle Sam's Corps of "Special Field Examiners" Is Virtually a Detective Agency Whose Duty It Is to See That No One Secures a Pension Fraudulently-How They Work and the Schemes They Run to Earth-A Few Instances of Clever Detective Work.



ROM an isolated farmhouse a man, carrying a satchel, stole early one morning and made his way stealthill to a nearby bay. It shoal and calm and on this particwater was so clear

peaking to the man

of dawn, calm and clear. A room of the bureau the man comes hurrying to this place carry- travel is along systematic lines. ng a bag. He undresses, as if to go in athing. No-he only removes his suit. First the law division determines This he puts on the beach, takes another whether or not the application is correct.



Later the same day a suit of clothes containing a cheap watch and a small sum of money was found on the beach. The inference was that some one had sone in bathing—and never returned. Investigation showed that the suit belonged to the man who had gone there early in the morning. Search was made and the bay dragged, but no body was the bay dragged, but no body was in a tiny room in a Pacific coast city it a man and a woman. The latter is a trance medium," and just now she is near the control of a "spirit' and is speaking to the man.

Who will try by every means they know to rob Uncle Sam of part of this money—money set aside by our national government for the men who served their country in her time of need; for the women who gave fathers, husbands and brothers at the call of the god of war for the little children whose fathers perished in the fulfillment of that service. The pension bureau is compelled to choose a careful way around the many pitfalls that line its path; to throw out a breastwork on one side for protection yet to maintain an easy entrance on the other. Its main source of safety lies in a corps of about eighty "special field examiners." Its general attitude of sympathy with and a desire to help its lawful pensioners constitutes its right to confidence.

The system established at the pension bureau is one warranted successfully to

ARE MADE OUT EACH YEAR.

reaking to the man.

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"I see a bay," she says, "peaceful in an application is received in the mail-

rom the bag and puts it on. Then he ly made. If formal, it goes to the record

he "trance" scene describes.

From this information the bureau was able to pick up the man's whereabouts and is even now looking for him as an impostor. It also developed that the "medlum" had written to the postmaster for information, with a view to black-tion with the gossips at the corner grocery. He showed keen interest in the subject of G. A. R pensions and it was not long before he knew who received and who were then making apart of the work. First That is a typical case—a single instance taken from many hundreds. It is safe to say that never a day goes by but this phase of the bureau's work comes upstarting an investigation which leads to the arrest of an impostor; preparing testimony to be used in court; carrying on proceedings which result in the imprisonment of the malefactor—all this and more forms a well recognized part of the routine work of caring for the nation's army and navy pensioners.

Nor is this class of criminals composed only of men. Women as well figure in many of the cases, for with such high stakes plenty of people are constantly entering this game of chance, ever hoping that some day they will succeed in cheating the government out of part of its funds.

Pension appropriations at the present time amount to approximately \$170,000,000 annually. That represents the total sum sent to the \$20,200 persons on the pension rolls today. And because men are always to be found who will scale fences and climb porch pillars that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that they may blow up safes, so also there are men who will undermine buildings that Titles, Ah, Titles!

Titles, A

WHO SENDIOUT \$ 180,000,000 LACHYEAR

DISBURSING CLIRK, GUY O.TAYLOR,

GAYLORD M.

COMMISSIONER PENSIONS

SALTZGABER

A Confederate soldier, who was a member of a Tennessee regiment that

BY WHICH TEN CHECKS ARE SIGNED AT ONE TIME.

SIGNOGRAPH

personating a man of similar name who had served in the Union ranks. At the trial there were comrades of the Confederate soldier, who had serv-

A Confederate soldier, who was a member of a Tennessee regiment that the bureau staff is the "camp follower."

Another type equally as familiar to deal. He was a man of many wives performed signal service during the of which the ensuing is but a single civil war, applied for a pension by im-

the few in which the Indian is still Inquiry followed the receipt of the remaining on reservations. In his state are what are what are what are state are state

For example, as many as three women have applied for a pension, all declaring they were the widow of the same man, and all believing it, when investigation showed that but one had a legal

Or, a woman has applied for a widow's pension later to find out that her hus-band was not even dead, but instead was living elsewhere with another

> Such cases as these are by no means fraudulent, but merely show the wide range of cases which come to the office and illustrate, in addition, the fact that many of them form far from pleasant chapters in the life of the bureau. Unwittingly and unintentionally the bureau has unearthed many a fact which has brought sorrow to at least one woman.
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> About twenty-flye years are a large way. brought sorrow to at least one woman.
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> About twenty-five years ago a law was passed by Congress which removed the limitation as to date of filing of certain claims for widows' pension, no matter how long the husband had been dead. When this law went into effect thousands of applications came into the office, and many were justly allowed. But with the rightful claims came scores or fraudulent ones. Such a one was the case of the woman who claimed to be the widow of a veteran who died nearly the wildow of a veteran who died nearly twenty-five years before. Her claim was allowed and \$4,000 paid her, the total amount due as a monthly pension stnee the date of his actual death. Later it

Such cases as these are by no means

the date of his actual death. Later it developed that the woman was no relation even of the dead solder. She was convicted and the greater portion of the money recovered.

Such cases as these came up with startling regularity at the time of the passage of this act. So frequently did this occur, in fact, that some persons even claimed the existence of organizations to forward that end, a belief, however, not entertained at the bureau. But certain it is that many attempts were made to secure widows' pension, which when investigated were found absolutely fraudulent.

An account of the attempted frauds in An account of the attempted frauds in the pension bureau would be incomplete without relating one case which shows more plainly than any other, perhaps, the almost invisible line that sometimes exists between the valid and invalid claim for a pension. It illustrates also the care which must constantly be exercised by the bureau in order not to grant a pension to one unworthy, nor yet deny it to one by whom it is deserved.

An application for a pension came in from an old veteran. Following the cus-tomary procedure, a request was sent to the War Description. the War Department asking for a verifi-cation of the man's statements in his testimony. The forthcoming report stated emphatically that the man was dead; had died in a certain hospital as the result of a wound received in a certain engage-ment during the war. There was nothing indefinite in the matter whatever. The facts were positive, and the man conse

indefinite in the matter whatever. The facts were positive, and the man consequently was dead so far as the War Department was concerned.

This information was forwarded to the applicant, who, upon receipt of the letter, hastily came in person to the pension bureau, bringing with him undeniable proof of his identity. He absolutely and conclusively proved himself alive and the owner of the name he had applied for pension under.

Such contradictory statements needed investigation, and the bureau lost no time in looking into the matter. Little by little, after much ferretting, this explanation was unearthed:

During one of the sieges of the civil war a detachment of Union troops was sent on a forced march. All unnecessary accoutements were discarded. During a halt, that the men might get a short rest, one of the soldiers caught sight of a knapsack, which he picked up and took with him on the rest of the march.

At the end of that march came an engagement, and the soldier with the knapsack was wounded. Upon being taken to the hospital, unconscious, he was registered by the only identification found upon his clothing, the name on the knapsack. Later he died, and was buried under the same name. The man who applied to the pension bureau for a pension was the rightful owner of that knapsack.

There is one man alive in fact, recently released from the penitentiary, where he served time for Such a one is told by a man who has given more than a quarter of a century of his lifetime to the bureau.

but it took eight witnesses to do it, and attempting to defraud the pension of they had to be found by the government at the cost of both time and more trouble than any other ten crimmonev. sent him back, time and time again

member of a Tennessee regiment that performs signal service during in the performacy signal service during in the personating a man of similar name who had served in the Union radicles, the Confederate soldler, who had served with him, and knew him to be an exconfederate soldler, who had served with the Union soldler man desting the the Union soldler sand the facility of the Union soldler sand the claimant was not their comrade. Still the man held his after that the claimant was not their comrade. Still the man held his after that the claimant was "not the man at married." Still the man persisted in the lating that the claimant was "not the man at married." Still the man persisted in the lating that the claim and the cla

soldier, and managed to get a copy of the state are what are thought to be the claimed by the man to whom the letter name. And for the first time in his law-







ment recently told a story to some inc," replied the second gentleman with North Carolina friends of the late "Dick" Thompson, former Secretary of the Navy.

"Mrs. Thompson was not aware that her husband was likely to be made Secretary," related Mr. Daniels, "until aper account of the car account of the car account of the car account of the car and gazed at them in open-was not aware that her husband was likely to be made Secretary," related Mr. Daniels, "until aper account of the car account of the second gentleman with a second gentleman with a second gentleman with a sunct to second gentleman with a sunct be second gentleman with as unct excursion field the second gentleman with as unct excursion field the second gentleman with as unct be second gentleman with as unct be such account of the second gentleman with as unct be such as unct excursion ticket from the huckleberry and the ten-day half an hour ago."

And, behold, there, in the Speaker's chair, the most conspicuous object in the chamber, sat Mr. Hay, holding down the job while the Speaker got his lunch. They couldn't see him for his proming proming for the car and gazed at them in open-with the corner of the car and gazed at them in open-with the corner of the car and gazed at them in open-with the corner of the car and gazed at them in open-with the corner of the car and gazed the min open-with the corner of the car and gazed at them in open-with t



country, and one of